



*In the Name of Allah,  
the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful*

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# Introduction

It is a well known fact that any reasonable understanding of Islam requires some knowledge of the language of the Qur'an, Arabic, due to the following reasons:

1. The two main sources of Islamic teachings, the Qur'an and the Sunnah, are in Arabic. There have been many attempts to render the meanings of these into other languages through translation. However, no translation can really convey the whole meaning of the original text, especially of religious or literary nature. For no two languages in the world have exact equivalents for their lexicons, even if they belong to the same family of languages. Naturally, the gap increases with the distance between the relevant languages in history and culture; the greater the difference (such as between Arabic and English) the wider the gap, and it is hard even for the cleverest of translators to close it. Besides, many Qur'anic verses and words have more than one meaning, which a

translator has to choose from; thus, the translation is by nature restricted and incomplete in such cases. Examples abound even in one "surah" (chapter) of the Qur'an, the first one, where we find words like, "al-Hamd", "ar-raHmaan, ar-raHiim" that are rich with meanings and implications which have only been partially conveyed in the various translations.

2. The bulk of references on various Islamic subjects have been written in Arabic. For even scholars living in non-Arabic speaking lands have most often made their valuable contributions in Arabic. There are tens of thousands of books on Islamic issues and topics, including Qur'anic exegesis, theology, jurisprudence, principles of Qur'anic exegesis, *tajweed* (rules of correct recitation of the Qur'an), principles of *hadeeth* (prophetic traditions) authentication, principles of Islamic jurisprudence etc. Very little of these references have been translated into other languages.
3. There are many key terms and expressions, such as "*raHmaan, Salaah, zakaah, 'umrah, 'ishaa', tajwiid, laa Hawla wala quwwata illaa bi-llaah*" which are not easy to translate into other languages.

Since the majority of the followers of Islam are not native speakers of Arabic, and many of them may not have the chance to learn it properly, translation has been resorted to, however incomplete it may be. But even good translators always find it difficult to translate the special terms from Arabic. A cursory look at the translation of various Islamic works would reveal the discrepancies between the Arabic text and its translation, on one hand, and the different renderings of the same Arabic terms by different translators or even by the same translator at different times.



14. Arabic nouns that have irregular plural forms (and a few others) are normally followed by their plural form or singular forms (if the entry word is in the plural form) in parentheses (with pl. meaning plural and sg. meaning singular). Examples: "khuluq (pl. akhlaaq)" and "naSaaraa (sg. naSraaniyy)". This makes it easier for the reader to recognize them when they are encountered in both their singular and plural forms.
15. Verbs, which are normally given in their basic past tense forms, are accompanied by the present tense forms between parentheses, because the reader would most often see them in these two forms.
16. Wherever appropriate, cross-reference is made to other entries in the Dictionary, which is indicated by putting the Arabic word between double quotes.
17. Double quotes are used for Arabic words in quotations and for cross-reference purposes. A word in double quotes is found in its place in the Dictionary. The reader may refer to it if he so wishes. Single quotes, on the other hand, are used to give the English meaning of the Arabic words and expressions in the comment/ definition part.

I sincerely hope that this Dictionary will be of some help to the readers of Islamic works and the seekers of knowledge about Islam and its lofty teachings.

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## T ransliteration Table

For practical reasons, the following system of transliteration of Arabic letters has been adopted.

Arabic Letter	Name	Transliteration
ا	'alif	aa (if a vowel)
ء	Hamza	'
ب	Baa	b
ت	Taa	t
ث	Thaa	th
ج	Jiim	j
ح	Haa	H
خ	Khaa	kh
د	Daal	d
ذ	Dhal	dh
ر	Raa	r
ز	Zaay	z



س	Siin	s
ش	Shin	sh
ص	Saad	S
ض	Daad	D
ط	Taa	T
ظ	Zaa	Z
ع	'ayn	'
غ	Ghayn	gh
ف	Faa	f
ق	Qaaf	q
ك	Kaaf	k
ل	Laam	l
م	Miim	m
ن	Nuun	n
ه	Haa	h
و	Waaw	w or uu (for the vowel)
ي	Yaa	y or ii ( for the vowel )
ـِ	fatHa	a ( short vowel as in ago )
ـُ	Damma	u ( short vowel as in put )



• ('aabid عابد)

**Aa**

'aabid (pl. 'ubbaad)

عابد (عباد)

Worshipper, devotee

A person devoted to worshipping Allah.

'aabiq أبقي

Runaway slave

A slave who runs away from his master for no legitimate reason.

'aad عاد

People of 'Ad

A people of the Arabian Peninsula to whom Allah sent the Prophet "huud" (Hood). It is said that they lived in the Yemen area. (See, e.g., the Qur'an, 11: 50-60).

'aadaab (sg. 'adab)

(آداب - أدب)

Manners, rules of conduct

Good morals and manners are mentioned by the Prophet (PBUH) as criteria of superiority of a believer over others. A Muslim is supposed to observe the laws of Islam in every aspect of his life,

• ('aakil ar-riba أكل الربا)

including the daily conduct of affairs (be that social, economic, political...).

'aadam آدم

Adam

The first human being created by Allah. His mate was Eve. (See the Qur'an, 2: 30-38 for references to his creation, sin, repentance...)

aadil عادل

just, fair

(al - 'aakhir) الآخر

The Last

A Divine Attribute of Allah. The One after Whom no one and nothing exists, because He is the Only Everlasting Being.

الأخرة (al-'aakhirah)

The Hereafter

Belief in life in the Hereafter (in the physical and spiritual senses) is one of the six corner-stones of "iimaan" (faith) in Islam.

'aakil ar-riba أكل الربا

Devourer of usury

Anyone who lends people money with interest / usury is guilty of devouring it, which means he purchases his food with money earned in that manner.



• 'aalam al-barzakh عالم البرزخ

Aa

**'aalam al-barzakh** عالم البرزخ  
Intermediate state  
See "barzakh".

**'aal' imraan** آل عمران

Family of Imran

In Chapter 3 of the Qur'an, this refers to the family of Maryam (Mary), the mother of 'iisaa (Jesus) (PBUH).

**'aal al-bayt** آل البيت

family of the Prophet (PBUH)  
Literally, the members of the household. The term is used to refer to the wives of the Prophet (PBUH), his offspring and Muslim uncles and cousins, who were forbidden to accept "sadaqah".

**'aal muHammad** آل محمد

family of Muhammad

See 'aal al-bayt.

**'aala (yuulii)** (آلى يولى)

To decide or make 'iilaa'

See 'iilaa' for the special sense of deciding to desert one's wife in bed.

**'aalam al-ghayb** عالم الغيب

The unseen world

Literally, 'the world of the unseen,' including the future and the Hereafter, which is known only to Allah.

• 'aam al-fiil عام الفيل

**'aalam ash-shahaadah**  
عالم الشهادة

The visible world

The present material world, as opposed to the Hereafter or the future, for example, which are not visible or known to us. The opposite of "'aalam al-ghayb" (the unseen world).

**'aalim (pl. 'ulamaa')**  
عالم (علماء)

scholar

In Islamic texts, the term usually refers to a scholar specializing in religious fields of knowledge.

**'aam al-bu'uuth** عام البعوث

Year of Deputations

The ninth year of the Hijrah is called the Year of Deputations, because deputations came from all over Arabia to the Prophet (PBUH) at Medina to declare their conversion to Islam and to learn about it.

**'aam al-fiil** عام الفيل

Year of the Elephant

The year 570 AD, when the Abyssinian viceroy in Yemen decided to invade Mecca and destroy the Ka'bah with an army that had elephants, but they were

• 'aamana (yu'min) (آمن يؤمن)

all miraculously destroyed. (See the Qur'an, 105). It was in this year that the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was born.

**'aamana (yu'min)** (آمن يؤمن)

To believe

When the verb is used in an unqualified manner in the Qur'an it refers to believing in Allah.

**aamiin** آمين

Amen

May God answer the prayer! The expression said at the end of the recitation of the Opening Chapter of the Qur'an, which ends with the prayer, "Guide us to the Straight Path, the Path of those who gained Your Favour, not those who deserved Your wrath, nor those who have gone astray." (the Qur'an, 1: 6-7). It is often heard after hearing all types of supplication.

**'aaqib (al-)** العاقب

The Last

The reference is to Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) being the last Prophet and Messenger of Allah.

**'aaqilah** عاقلة

Blood money payers

Relatives, such as ancestors or

• 'aaS(in) (pl. 'uSaah) (عاص عصاة)

descendants who are responsible (with the murderer) for paying the blood money to the family of the murdered victim.

**'aaqil 1** عاقل

Wise

**'aaqil 2** عاقل

Sane

Legally, this means someone who is of sound mind; therefore, he is responsible for his actions.

**'aariyyah** عارية

Loaned object

Something borrowed from someone. Naturally, it should be returned intact as much as possible.

**'aamil (pl. 'ummaal)**

عامل (عمال)

Governor

In classical use, the governor appointed by the caliph to rule a certain area in his name.

**'aaS(in) (pl. 'uSaah)**

عاص (عصاة)

Sinner, rebellious

The term means 'sinner' if he is rebellious against Divine commands; otherwise, it means a persistently disobedient person.



• baraa' (al--) البراء

**baraa' (al--)** البراء

Disavowal

The term is found in the context of a Muslim's relationship with disbelievers. It is contrasted with "al-walaa'" (loyalty) which a Muslim should show to other Muslims.

**baraa'ah** براءة

Innocence, freedom from

In the Qur'an this word is found at the beginning of Chapter 9 to mean freedom from obligation.

**barakah** بركة

Blessing

Often, the term is used to refer to plentifulness.

**barru(n) (pl. 'abraar)** بر (أبرار)

Righteous

**barzakh** برزخ

Barrier, interval between lives

In Islamic theology, the term refers to the interval between death and resurrection, or between life in this world and life in the Hereafter.

**bashiir** بشير

Bringer of glad tidings

One of the tasks of the Prophet was to bring glad tidings to the

• bayaan at-tabdiil بيان التبديل

believers; hence he is described as "bashiir" in the Qur'an. This term is contrasted with "nadhiiir" (warner).

**baSiir (al--)** البصير

The All-Seeing

A Divine Attribute of Allah. The One Whose Sight encompasses everything.

**baSiirah (pl. baSaa'ir)**

بصيرة (بصائر)

Insight

The capacity to gain an accurate and good intuitive understanding of affairs.

**ba'th (al--)** البعث

The Resurrection

Resurrecting the dead. Often we read the term "yawm al-ba'th" to refer to the Day of Resurrection (Judgment).

**batuul (al--)** البتول

The pious and chaste one

This term is often used to refer to Maryam / Mary (mother of the Prophet Jesus).

**bayaan at-tabdiil**

بيان التبديل

statement of abrogation

Indicating that a certain ruling has

• bay' al-gharar (al-jahaalah) (بيع الغرر (الجهالة))

been abrogated by the legislator (e.g., Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)).

**bay' al-gharar (al-jahaalah)**

بيع الغرر (الجهالة)

Deceitful sale

The sale of something that looks good, but actually bad.

**bay' as-salam** بيع السلم

Postponed delivery sale

A sale agreement in which the seller promises to deliver the goods at a later date.

**bay' mu'ajjal** بيع مؤجل

Deferred sale

A transaction in which the delivery of the purchased goods is made at a later date.

**bay'ah** بيعة

Oath of allegiance, pledge

Giving an oath of allegiance to someone. The verb is baaya'a (yubaayi')

**bay'at ar-riDwaan**

بيعة الرضوان

Pledge of (Divine) Pleasure

This refers to the pledge Muslims gave to the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) at Hudaibiyah, near Makkah to fight the disbelieving

• baynuunah kubraa بينونة كبرى

Makkans if asked to. We find reference to this in the Qur'an (48: 10 and 18).

**bay'at al-'aqabah al-'uulaa**

بيعة العقبة الأولى

First 'Aqabah Pledge

The pledge made by twelve people from Yathrib (Medina) to the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) at a place near Makkah to accept the teachings of Islam. The Prophet (PBUH) sent with them the first Muslim missionary, Mus'ab ibn 'umayr.

**bay'at al-'aqabah**

ath-thaaniyah

بيعة العقبة الثانية

Second 'Aqabah Pledge

The pledge made by seventy-three Yathribite people, including two women, to the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), at a place near Makkah, to defend him as they would their own selves and families if he migrated to their town, Yathrib (Medina).

**baynuunah kubraa**

بينونة كبرى

Major / absolute finality

The divorce after which a woman may not go back to her former



• ghaDD al-baSar غض البصر

### ghaDD al-baSar

#### غض البصر

Lowering the gaze

Not gazing improperly at somebody. Believers are required to lower their gaze especially in the presence of the opposite sex, out of modesty. (See the Qur'an, 24: 30-31).

#### ghadr غدر

Betrayal, treachery

An example, is killing someone from behind or without warning or betraying someone who trusts you.

### ghalbat aZ-Zann

#### غلبة الظن

Higher probability

Indications are stronger in favour of some opinion or ruling.

### ghaffaar (al--) الغفار

The Most Forgiving

A Divine Attribute of Allah. The One Whose forgiveness has no limits.

### ghaflah غفلة

Inattention, oblivion

Inadvertent negligence, or a state of forgetting about Allah and that He is watching us.

• ghargharat al-mawt غرغرة الموت

### ghafuur (al--) الغفور

The Ever-Forgiving

A Divine Attribute of Allah. The One Who keeps forgiving the repenting sinners, and Whose forgiveness knows no limits.

### ghaniimah (pl. ghanaa'im) غنيمة (غنائم)

Spoils of war

What is won from the enemy in a legitimate war.

### gharuur (al--) غرور

Satan the Deceiver

Al-gharuur is used in the Qur'an to refer to the most deceitful being, Satan, because he entices people, especially through false promises, to commit sins and do wrong things. (See the Qur'an, 31: 33.)

### ghaniyy (al--) الغني

The Self-Sufficient

A Divine Attribute of Allah. The One Who has no need for anyone or anything. (See the Qur'an, 6: 133.)

### ghargharat al-mawt

#### غرغرة الموت

Gargle of death

The time when the soul departs the body. At this time repentance

• ghaSb غصب

from sins or disbelief is not accepted from anyone.

### ghaSb غصب

Illegal seizure

To take something, often a piece of property, by force.

### ghayb (pl. ghuyuub) غيب (غيوب)

Unseen thing

Something that we cannot see, be it in the past, present or future, but especially the future.

### ghaybat al-'imaam

#### غيبة الإمام

Occultation of the imam

The Shi'ite belief of the temporary disappearance of the twelfth imam, al-Mahdiy, to appear in the later days.

### ghayrah غيرة

Jealousy

A feeling of envy of others who have something we do not have. It is also used to mean a sense of vigilance or feeling of protection of one's female relatives.

### ghayZ غيظ

Rage

Uncontrolled temper or extreme annoyance of something / someone.

• ghazwat badr غزوة بدر

### ghazwah غزوة

Battle, campaign

The term normally refers to a campaign or battle which was under the leadership of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). This is contrasted with "sariyyah" (expedition) where someone else leads.

### ghazwat al-aHzaab

#### غزوة الأحزاب

Battle of the Clans/confederates

This was one of the most dangerous battles in early Islamic history, which took place in the fifth year after the Hijra. A reference is given in the Qur'an to this Battle in the Chapter that has the name "al-aHzaab" (33: 9-25). It is also known as "ghazwat al-khandaq".

### ghazwat badr غزوة بدر

The Battle of Badr

The first battle in Islamic history between the Prophet (PBUH) and the Muslims (about 300) against the polytheists of Makkah (more than 1000), and the Muslims came out victorious, with many leaders of Quraish killed or captivated. The Battle started on the 17th of Ramadan, second year of Hijrah.



the low, except such as believe and do righteous deeds, for they shall have a reward unfailing". This is a sure matter, because God is the wisest of Judges.

### Tuur (suurat aT--)

#### سورة الطور

Chapter of the Mount

This is Chapter 52 of the Qur'an, taking its title from the word in the opening verse. This Chapter has been summarized in the following, "All Signs of God, including previous Revelations, point to the inevitable consequences of ill-deeds and good deeds: how can people deny or ignore the Message of Revelation?"



### waaqi'ah (suurat al--)

#### سورة الواقعة

Chapter of the Inevitable Event

This is Chapter 56 of the Qur'an, taking its title from the word mentioned in the first verse of the Chapter and refers to the Hour of Judgment. In this Chapter people are classified into three categories,

with regards to their future life in the Hereafter, Companions of the Right Hand, Companions of the Left Hand and those Foremost in the Hereafter. The fate of each category is described: (1) the Foremost or the nearest to God (verses 10-26 and 88-9), (2) the Companions of the Right Hand (verses 27-38 and 90-1) and (3) the Companions of the Left Hand (41-56 and 92-94). Among the verses frequently cited are verses 77-79, "Indeed is a noble Qur'an. In a Register well protected. Which [the Qur'an] none shall touch but those who are (ritually) clean." According to this rule, non-Muslims and even Muslims who are not in a state of ritual purity and cleanliness ("muTahharuun") are not allowed to touch the Qur'an in its original, Arabic text. The recitation of this Chapter every evening is recommended for protection from poverty.



### yaasiin (suurat --)

#### سورة يس

Chapter of Yaasiin

This is Chapter 36 of the Qur'an, taking its title from the first verse, which a combination of two letters. Some exegetists claim that the word refers to Prophet Muhammad, being a combination of the vocative 'yaa' and 'siin' or the combination itself is a title of the Prophet (PBUH). It has been reported that the Prophet (PBUH) called this Chapter "the heart of the Qur'an". In fact, many people in the Muslim World memorize it and recite it frequently on certain occasions. In the Hadeeth Muslims are recommended to recite this Chapter over the deceased person.

In this Chapter we find the verse that was recited by Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) on the way out of his home to emigrate to Medina walking in between the ranks of young pagans who were waiting to strike him with their drawn swords, and he put dust on their heads, since they were miraculously put to sleep in their standing position. This is the verse which translates, "And We have put before them a barrier and behind them a barrier and covered them, so they do not see." (verse 9)

### yuunus (suurat ---)

#### سورة يونس

Chapter of Jonah

This is the 10th chapter of the Qur'an. It takes its title from the name of Prophet "yuunus" (Jonah) (verse 98). In this Chapter we find many verses that remind people of God's favours and their duty to obey Him. Stories of some prophets of God, including Noah, Moses and Aaron's encounters with Pharaoh, the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt, by safely crossing the sea, and the drowning of the Pharaoh (75-92), are mentioned in this chapter.

In this Chapter we find the third reference to freedom of belief, which translates, "And had your Lord willed, those on earth would have believed - all of them entirely. Then, [O Muhammad], would you compel the people in order they become believers?!" (verse 99) We also read one of the verses that challenge people to produce the like of the Qur'an (verse 38).

### yuusuf (suurat --)

#### سورة يوسف

Chapter of Joseph

This is Chapter 12 of the Qur'an. Most of this Chapter revolves around the story of Prophet